

REMARKS

The disclosure was originally objected to because of some informalities. Responsive to this, the specification is corrected in accordance with the Examiner's instruction, and it is believed that the objection should be removed.

Claim 1 has been amended to include additional limitations which are disclosed in the specification and drawings of the present application. It is noted that the recess in the first handle of the claimed device is not merely for receiving the second scrubbing stick of the second set as shown in Fig. 3, but the second set can be used as shown in Fig. 5, wherein the second end of the second handle is inserted in the recess of the first handle to position the second set in the position as disclosed in Fig. 5.

Further, none of the cited references discloses the specific structure to position the second set relative to the first handle. In other words, the second scrubbing stick can be received in the recess or can extend beyond the recess by engaging the ring protruding from the second handle with the inner periphery of the recess of the first handle. The first and second ends of the second handle can be selectively inserted into the recess of the first handle according the intention of use. None of the cited references discloses the specific structure and function as recited in claim 5.

For the claimed device, the ring protrudes from the outer periphery of the second handle and is force-fitted with the inner periphery of the recess of the first handle and no groove is defined in the inner periphery of the recess to receive the ring so that no foreign object or water can enter into the recess. On the contrary, neither of Dunn, Batch and Martinez discloses the application of the ring as disclosed in the claimed device. Although Irizarry discloses a ring 21 which is fixed to the handle 17 not on the handle 11, and the handle 11 as disclosed in Fig. 3 obviously includes a groove to receive the ring 21. The ring tends to be disengaged from the handle 17 by frequent insertion and removal of the handle 11. Once the ring 21 is loosened or drops from the handle 17, it is difficult to fix another ring to the original position because the area for fixing the ring of the handle 17 is so small.

It is believed that, the amended claim 1, claims 2-4, as originally filed, and claim 5 as added recite a structure whose construction and function are quite different from and patentably distinguishable over the cited prior art. Therefore, it is believed that, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) and 103 (a) should be removed, and the claims should be allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that the application is now in a condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. If any points remain in issue, which the Examiner feels could best be resolved by either a personal or a telephone interview, he is urged to contact Applicant's attorney at the exchange listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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